

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE LIFE OF BEACONFIELD.

THE INTERNATIONAL STATESMEN SERIES. Edited by Lloyd C. Sanders. Life of Lord Beaconsfield. By T. E. Kebbel. 12mo., pp. vi. 220. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

The "Life of Lord Beaconsfield" is the initial volume of a new series intended, as explained by the editor, "to comprise a collection of brief biographical studies of the great men who have influenced the political history of the world." The biography of Beaconsfield may presumably be regarded as indicating the scope of the enterprise. It is full enough to afford such as have everything to learn concerning the subject a measurably clear idea of the man. The political career of the great Tory leader is presented with considerable fulness. But the limitations of the book, a novel, each number will contain a concise short story or part of a short serial. The editor intends to strengthen the purely literary portions of the magazine. This is one of the most refined and interesting of the publications of the time.

FROM THE NEW-YORK TRIBUNE.

We are glad to record the fact that the English Illustrated Magazine is to be enlarged to seventy pages, the price remaining the same. Besides the usual articles, there will be added to each number a complete short story or part of a short serial. The editor intends to strengthen the purely literary portions of the magazine. It is not possible to isolate a statesman from the time he acted in and influenced, and to confine the chronicles of his deeds to the bare actualities, without sacrificing a large part of the interest which naturally belongs to such history, and without obscuring the significance of his achievements in many instances. This applies with particular force in the case of Disraeli, whose character was so self-contained and his expression so guarded that the colleagues who worked with him and the party which followed him were often perplexed as to his real purposes and positions.

No man—no modern, at least—stands more in need of the illuminating power of his environment, in short; and to separate him from it is to incur the risk of still further confusing many problems already sufficiently difficult. One point, however, certainly does show the more conspicuously for this isolation: A bold sketch of his political career does much to demonstrate the general consistency of his beliefs and of his positions. Tory he began, and Tory he ended; and if the course of English politics during his later life diverged so far from the lines advocated by him in youth as to leave him almost in the air, it must be acknowledged that not a few of the predictions ventured by him half a century ago, in respect to the consequences of going counter to the policies he espoused, have been curiously fulfilled. Mr. Kebbel's attempt to indicate parallels between the opinions advanced in his political novels and his public utterances and measures can hardly be thought successful. The biographer indeed finds it necessary to admit that Disraeli very often wrote one way and acted another. Not that there is anything surprising in this. In writing he was irresponsible, and controlled the situation; in acting he was responsible, and the situation largely controlled him. Yet there were views of his which may be said to have dominated both phases of his life, and one of the most interesting of these, relating to the history and destiny of his race, receives quite inadequate treatment in this volume. This seems to us an unfortunate circumstance, for to understand Disraeli it is indispensable to study what may be called the Oriental side of his character. It was undoubtedly this side of him which made him even to the last a puzzle to half England, and which, because of its incomprehensibility by the average British mind, rendered him for so long a time the object of sharp suspicion and political distrust. It was, perhaps, this side of him which chiefly incited the coalition whose antagonism he always ascribed to personal hatred of himself.

Mr. Kebbel succeeds in exhibiting the alertness of his intellect, his adroitness as a parliamentary tactician, his indomitable resolution, his versatility, wit, and caustic humor, though somewhat dimly for the most part. In truth, the speeches which when delivered convulsed the House or roused it to readamnem, enough in cold print, but a fund of anecdote of which a "Daisy" is the center accumulated during his long Parliamentary career, and might surely have been drawn upon to illustrate and to enliven this biography. Of his many duels with Mr. Gladstone numerous graphic accounts are extant, and many a portrait of him as he stood or fought with gladiatorial pluck and ferocity in the arena. Nothing of this material has been used by Mr. Kebbel, and we think it a pity, for after all, the most genuine Disraeli was the Disraeli of the House of Commons—and, perhaps, it might be added, when on the Opposition benches. The time has not yet come for assigning him his final place in history and in statemanship, though it is a safe prediction that the defects of his character and the mistakes of his career will seem less grave and disastrous than a large proportion of his contemporaries thought them, while the reality and depth of his patriotism will cease to be seriously questioned. The biographer who deals fittingly and broadly with his life will moreover be careful to bear in mind the hereditary tendencies and intellectual peculiarities which separated him from his fellow-subjects, and which, notwithstanding his utmost efforts at complete assimilation, doomed him to be and to appear, from beginning to end, an Englishman with a difference.

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